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The Book of Mormon, and the End of the World

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Abstract: This is a six-part series discussing how Mormonism fulfills biblical prophecy concerning the last days: the coming of Elijah, restoration of the gospel, and correct ordinances such as baptism by immersion and the sacrament, Church organization, and continuing revelation. The first part introduces the series.

LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

"The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant."
—ISAIAH xxiv, 5.

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THE BOOK OF MORMON, AND THE END OF THE WORLD.

BY ELDER L. F. MONCH.

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"In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."—Matt. xviii, 16.

OF all the books published in the nineteenth century, perhaps none has attained a wider reputation, and been more universally known both for good and evil, than the one given as a part of the subject of this article; and notwithstanding the repeated attacks of its enemies, it is slowly but surely finding its way "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people," thus fulfilling the remarkable prophecy announcing its appearance. Within the short period of a little over fifty years, dating from its first appearance in this dispensation, it has been translated from the English into the French, German, Italian, Danish, Swedish, Welsh, Kanaka, Hindostanee, Dutch and Spanish languages, thus giving many of the leading nations of the earth an opportunity to read its sacred contents—a marvelous achievement, which scarcely any other book, except the Bible, has accomplished; and not only has it been

translated into these languages, but in nearly every instance published and sold among the people who speak them, thus virtually bringing it to their very doors. Thousands upon thousands of these various peoples have received its message with glad hearts, thanking their heavenly Father that they have been fortunate enough to receive those golden precepts from heaven which have whispered peace to their souls, and guided their wandering feet upon that narrow way which leadeth unto life eternal. Among this number the author of this article claims a rank, in consequence of which he has always entertained a sacred regard for this holy book, for he realizes that it has brought happiness and the assurance of future salvation to his soul; and being anxious that others might also drink from its fountains of living waters, he resolved to aid in his feeble way to throw a little light upon its

path in its onward march upon its sacred cause. In this, our chief object will be not to enter upon a disquisition of the contents of the book, but simply to establish by Biblical evidence its appearance, and in connection with that another very important event as indicated by the heading of this article.

All who have read or seen a copy of the Book of Mormon will have noticed the remarkable testimony of the three witnesses to its divine origin, and the writer feels impressed in the first instance to review in brief their testimony as published in that book, and show how far it is reliable, and therefore to what degree it is binding upon the inhabitants of the earth. As the names of these personages, however, are directly connected, or at least one of them, with two remarkable prophecies, one in the last chapter of the Old Testament, and the other in the latter part of the New, both indicative of the time in which we are living, and also in harmony with the second part of the heading of this article, it might prove of interest to the reader to give a passing notice of them before coming directly to the issue.

The writer realizes that these passages have been commented upon again and again by the ablest writers of the STAR; indeed, so much so that he feels a timidity in attempting to add anything new to what has been said, realizing that some of the wisest and greatest of God's servants have so fully explained them in all their details, that there is scarcely a syllable in them that has not received its due weight and ample consideration; and the only apology he can offer for so doing is, that it may be of interest to those who have not had an opportunity to hear nor perhaps read the comments of these men; and as a little star may, in the absence of the glorious sun, prove of inestimable value to the lost wanderer of the desert, so may this perhaps prove a shimmering ray of light to those in search of truth.

Editors and priests have been telling us for many centuries that we are living in the last days, but more particularly has it been expatiated upon during the present century. Some

have been even bold enough to designate the day and the hour when this grand winding up scene shall occur, calling upon mankind to repent and prepare themselves for it. The world is flooded with pamphlets and books presuming to unfold this mystery; editors sound it forth in flaming words of fire from the daily press; priests herald it in thundering tones into the ears of their sleeping congregations, to rouse them from their morbid stupor and scare them into heaven; laymen discuss it by the flickering flame, and women with fearful forebodings repeat it to their youthful offspring.

These deductions are drawn by these wise men from various prophecies in the Scriptures, pointing indirectly to these times. They avoid, however, those which give unmistakable proofs of such times, and this simply because mankind is ever prone to garnish the tombs of dead prophets, but persecute and put to death the living ones; in consequence of which men, up to the present century at least, have proven themselves false prophets, fulfilling the prediction of the Savior, and furnishing one of the signs of the times — "For false Christs and false prophets shall arise." With the admission, however, of visions, dreams, prophets, angel appearances and revelations, the mystery is solved, as the following passages will clearly prove:

In the fourth chapter of Malachi, fifth and sixth verses, we read as follows: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

Some scripturalists seem to be of the opinion that this passage had its fulfillment in the appearance of John the Baptist, basing their opinions upon the remark of the Savior, where He said, "And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come." There can be no greater mistake than this, for the missions of the two are entirely different, that of the latter being to prepare the way for the

Savior, as Malachi tells us in the third chapter, first verse, which preparation we are told was baptism, all of which has been fulfilled; whereas the mission of the second was to turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, a work which we are nowhere informed in the New Testament has been fulfilled. Again, the first was to come when the Lord should suddenly come to His temple, an event which we are again informed by these scripturalists has been fulfilled; but the second was to come before the great and dreadful day of the Lord should come, as we are informed in the first verse of the same chapter, and which reads as follows: "For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." The Apostle Peter testified, after the death of the Savior, in similar language of this event, although in somewhat stronger terms. He says: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up." Now this is precisely the same time testified of by Malachi, but, as we all know, it has not yet been fulfilled.

If we now ask these wise men, has this angel come? the answer almost invariably will be, "We do not believe in angel appearances, dreams, visions nor prophets;" and hence, if one should come to such a person, he would be branded as a deceiver and as a false prophet, for it must be remembered that angels do not always appear in their glory, for Paul tells us, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." If we ask any of the so-called religious denominations of the day (for be it remembered they do not call "Mormonism" a religion), they will tell us they know nothing about it, and like these wise men they will say, "We do not believe in such things in this

enlightened nineteenth century; indeed, we do not need them. Besides, if such a thing should happen, and such a personage were to come to any other church than ours, we would not let him preach in our pulpit, for we have a strict law in our church forbidding any one to preach excepting those who are of us—that is, do as we do, for if he does not do as we do, or brings anything contrary to what we have, he cannot be of God, for we are right, and we will receive nothing else." Yet this angel is to come with a commission to perform a certain work. Now, if this work could be done without this angel, it would not be necessary for him to come, which would also be the case if they were doing it. This work is also to be of eminent worth, for without it, we are told, the Lord would smite the earth with a curse. Mankind, therefore, should receive the announcement of his appearance with joy, irrespective of where, when and how. They should also remember that when Gabriel came, he came to a woman of lowly birth, married subsequently to a carpenter; and that when Jesus the Son of God was born, He was born in a manger, and was called the carpenter's son. Yea, in all days and ages of the world God has chosen from the humbler classes His instruments to perform His great and marvelous work. Such were nearly all the Prophets of the old Scriptures, especially this very Prophet Elijah, who, we are informed, was dressed like John the Baptist—*i. e.*, "with camel's hair, and with a leathern girdle about his loins." Such were the Apostles in the Savior's time; in fact, this is the mistake the world has always made—they have sought for the men of God and Prophets of God among the wise and learned of the world, forgetting the words of Paul: "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty." When will mankind learn this one lesson, "that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."

As we have observed, everywhere among these denominations do we hear that we are living in the last days, and that the great and terrible day of the Lord is at our doors; yet

nowhere among them do we hear of the appearance of this angel. But strange, right among this people, the "Mormons," which the whole world does not regard as a religious sect, hating them, persecuting them, and banishing them, as the world did Christ and His Apostles and His whole Church in His days, as well as the Prophets of old, fulfilling the words of the Savior: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." But "wo unto you when all men speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets"—right here, among this people, we find the following remarkable fact recorded in one of their books:

"Visions manifested to Joseph (Smith), the Seer, and Oliver Cowdery, in the Kirtland Temple, April 3, 1836."

[Here follows a narration of a number of visions as indicated by the above heading, near the close of which the following is noted]:

"13. After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us, for Elijah the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said—

14. Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying that he (Elijah) should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come,

15. To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitren with a curse.

16. Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors."—(Sec. 110, Doc. & Cov., new edition.)

Here we have now two witnesses in accordance with the law laid down by our Lord and Master, as published at the heading of this article, testifying that this angel has come precisely as recorded by the Prophet Malachi, and as we have thus far proven. If, therefore, we can prove that the testimony of these persons (which they have never denied) is unimpeachable, they never having been convicted of any crime, we have here something definite, telling us exactly the time in which we are living, and what we are at any day to expect. But as their names are directly connected with another important message, as we shall directly see, we will defer comment until we have noticed it. For the present, however, we will say that one of these two has sealed his testimony with his blood, while the other also has passed behind the veil; and as the testator's word is not in full force till after his death, the testimony of these men is now in full force, and those who have a soul to save will do well to give heed unto their words, for the angel said this great day is at our doors, and when anything has once reached the door it is not far off, and may enter at any unexpected moment.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

REFLECTIONS ON PERSECUTION.

BY ELDER JOSEPH D. SMITH.

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"If ye were of the world the world would love its own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John xv: 19.)

This was the truthful but not over-cheering remark made by our Savior to His Apostles after having ordained them, and made all things known to them that the Father had made

known to Him. He addressed them as friends instead of servants; at the same time reminding them that He was hated by those self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees who were pro-